# Conquering Social Media Resistance

## 'Digital natives' and 'digital immigrants'

What differentiates the 'digital native' generation, who grew up with the Internet from those who didn't?

Typically, many older workers, or 'digital immigrants', talk about their comfort zone.  They find comfort in a hierarchical, command and control management structure.  They are good communicators, who like to think, plan and do – in that order. They favour a top-down approach and generally like to play safe. Many of our senior managers fit into the digital immigrant generation.

Digital natives, on the other hand, prefer a guiding and nurturing environment.  They do not want instructions handed down from on-high.  They are great communicators and great networkers. But they do it differently.  Digital tools and social media are like extensions of themselves.  This emerging generation thinks acts and communicates quickly.  They like engagement and like to try things out.  They harness their team's collective experience and skills in order to find solutions.  It's all about communicating. Many of the people now joining the workforce are digital natives.

## The old way and the new?

The old way uses intranets or websites as static sites.  Staff can search and find, but have limited ability to contribute.  The new way is interactive and collaborative and uses social media such as Social networks (e.g. Facebook), Blogs, Discussion Forums and Wikis.

Social media tools definitely add value to employee communications.  They can help build relationships, increase collaboration, improve productivity, reduce silos, and build engagement.  They also offer an excellent means to share ideas and gather qualitative feedback.

## So why is social media sometimes so hard to implement as an internal communications tool?

Communicators understand the power of social media but their senior managers, who are often digital immigrants, remain wary and unconvinced.  Are these the arguments that you are hearing?

1. It's not a priority - overcome this issue

2. We don't have the time, money or resources - overcome this issue

3. It doesn't suit our culture - overcome this issue

4. It will open a 'can of worms' – overcome this issue

5. It's too risky, too uncontrolled - overcome this issue

6. Productivity will suffer - overcome this issue

7. Uptake will be low - overcome this issue

8. It won't let us - overcome this issue

9. You can't demonstrate the business value - overcome this issue

10. There's no clear way to measure success - overcome this issue

# It's not a priority

Sometimes IT professionals don't consider Web 2.0 a priority. They're focused on network consolidation, outsourcing, CRM, and security. This would seem to back up management's assertion that Intranet 2.0 needs to take a back seat.

## The response

Point out that Web 2.0 tools are already commonplace.  Innovative companies are already leveraging the power of these tools.  Many social media tools are easy and relatively cheap to implement.  They don't need to compete with major IT plans.

Don't make sweeping claims when you are proposing social media tools.  Managers don't want to hear about social media democratizing the organization.  They want to know how business goals will be supported.  So use language the CEO will understand and focus on concrete goals where possible.

Spot opportunities and start with small simple projects. Provide evidence of success before proposing a wider implementation.

Do your homework. Support your proposal for a wider implementation with case studies.  IBM, Sun Microsystems and the hundreds of other Fortune 500 companies are already successfully wielding these tools.

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms web 2.0 channels (Employee Blogs, Staff Discussion Forums, and Interactive Staff Helpdesks and Q&A channels) have been specifically designed for employee communication.  They are low cost communications channels that are quick and easy to implement and manage.

The SnapComms Client applet is pre-packaged for deployment, making it a minor project for IT to deploy to employee's computers. Once deployed, the Internal Communications team can easily set up and run web 2.0 channels for employee communication. There is little need for ongoing IT support.

Employee Blogs and Discussion Forums can be set up, and access rights targeted to specific staff groups in a matter of minutes.  Centralised reporting built specifically for employee communications measurement allows you to easily quantify the value of the web 2.0 channels and demonstrate their strategic communications value to senior managers.

A free trial or low cost pilot is available from SnapComms which allows you to test concepts out prior to a more comprehensive commitment to social media as an internal communications channel.

# We don't have the time, money or resources

Management quite rightly recognizes that communicators are already overworked.   They might also voice concerns about the cost of the tools and the lack of support resources.

## The response

Explain tools that assist internal communications assist you.

As for the tools being hungry on money and resources, explain that generally these tools are relatively inexpensive and require little time to set up.  Rather then worrying about the return on investment in financial terms the focus should be on what can be gained from making them available.

To keep costs down, lease a Web 2.0 solution.  This allows you to leverage developments based on learning from other organisations.

**Study less and do more:**

- Start the dialogue and keep listening to the comments
- Spot opportunities in the business where social media could provide a good fit
- Start small and simple and use an iterative process
- Predict concerns and solve problems early
- Create an army of evangelists

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms social media channels were designed to be easy to use by Internal Communicators and staff alike.  As these web 2.0 channels have been built only for employee communications purposes, they are not a 'one size fits all' solution with a confusing array of set-up options.

New employee blogs and staff discussion forums can be set up by internal communicators in just a few clicks.  Staff participation and access levels are authenticated by the SnapComms Client residing on individual computers. This means that employee blogs and staff discussion forums are not only very secure but employees also do not need to remember a user name and password.  Just one click and they are able to participate. The user friendly, intuitive design of the SnapComms channels allows staff to participate with little or no training.

The SnapComms Web 2.0 channels are also very cost effective (just US$3 or less per user per year for unlimited use) meaning that the channels can often fit within existing employee communications budgets.

Free trials and a 'per user' charging structure allow you to test out small deployments and evolve the use of staff social media channels based on staff feedback and learning.

Increases in productivity facilitated by improved information flow can easily cost justify the use of social media for employee communications.  For example, the Helpdesk channel provides effective real time support channels for staff by allowing them to ask questions in interactive online helpdesks.  The nominated moderator(s) receive desktop alert notifications when questions are posted to staff helpdesks. This means that answers can be made available almost immediately and become part of an evolving searchable repository of knowledge.

# It doesn't suit our culture

"These tools aren't a fit with our culture.  It's not the way we do business…"

## The response

Do you have a young, tech-savvy workforce in an organisation with a flat structure, or is the structure hierarchical with predominantly older workers who may feel uncomfortable with new technology.

It is important to recognise your culture, and to work out what will work and what won't.  It is true social media fits better where the culture is democratic and open, rather than hierarchical and paternal. However, even conservative companies are finding increasing numbers of digital natives joining their ranks. Collaboration and team work are here to stay.  Knowledge-sharing enables the whole company to benefit from an individual's expertise, and ensures that this knowledge doesn't exit the organisation when the individual leaves.

Explain that providing additional channels for sharing information does not equate to loss of control or a decline in standards. It should lead to increased productivity and innovation.

It may be helpful to encourage knowledge-sharing and collaboration by assisting executives to lead by example.  You could also workout a system of rewards for champion bloggers and networkers.

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms social media channels have been built with nervous managers in mind. New technology can be scary, especially if it allows staff to say what they like online.

The SnapComms social media channels provide a range of moderation options. Simply select the setting required for a specific employee blog, staff discussion forum or online helpdesk. Even the most risk adverse managers should feel comfortable with a communications channel that requires every post and comment moderated. Moderators receive desktop alerts to approve content so that approval (or not) can be fast and seamless.

In time, as managers become more comfortable with the social media as an employee communications tool, it may be appropriate to reset the moderation level to only anonymous posts and comments or even to switch moderation off altogether.

For organizations that are really adverse to social media, why not consider a tool like SnapMag? SnapMag enables you to distribute 'safe discussion' directly to the employee's computer screen.

SnapMag is a medium that supports 'user generated' content but in a more controlled way than either a employee blog or staff discussion forum. Any member of staff can click to submit articles or comments into the 'magazine'.  An editor simply reviews and approves articles prior to publication which are then automatically populated into the e-mag.  SnapMag provides a means to involve and engage staff with greater editorial control.

# It will open a 'can of worms'

"Employees will say inappropriate things. People will complain, or insult management. Bad language will appear on comments…"

Management may express concerns that the 'rumour mill' will take over, or that staff will spend all day complaining. Management may also be concerned that knowledge-sharing via staff forums or blogs sets a dangerous precedent. This informant is 'unofficial' as no-one has authorised it.

## The response

Gossip and staff complaints were around long before Web 2.0 came on the scene. If social media channels do throw up unpleasant surprises, you have at least identified that there are issues which you can address, rather than having a seething undercurrent. Where engagement is low and/or guidelines and policy are not stated, staff may not know how else to communicate worries or causes of dissatisfaction.

Define what social media tools can be used for as part of your strategy and communicate the policy. For example, some companies allow comments to go live without being filtered, whereas others insist that comments go through the editor. Some organizations allow anonymous posts while others don't. Some even have a forum entitled 'Rumour Mill' to flush concerns and gossip out into the open to be addressed.

Not all information needs to be official. Tacit knowledge is still shared around the water cooler, or sent via a memo or email. It may never be captured in a form that can be shared. Management agree that this is a huge disadvantage when knowledgeable staff leave, taking their 'unofficial' knowledge with them. Online tools, on the other hand, capture this know-how. Your staff will easily recognize the distinction between opinion and authoritative content.

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms Web 2.0 Channels allows you to specify a 'Code of Conduct' clearly at the top of each page view. You can link to an existing code of conduct on the intranet or type in a code of conduct specific to the employee blog or staff discussion forum.

A range of moderation levels allow you to monitor and approve posts if required. For example, moderators can be set to receive a desktop alert when an anonymous post or comment is made.

Access levels can be easily set up by the administrator based on existing network structures (or newly created targeting groups). You can easily specify which employees have author, comment and view rights. Only staff with view rights can access specified employee blogs and staff discussion forums. This allows you to set up confidential or sensitive discussions forums and workgroups online with full assurance of confidentiality.

The staff helpdesk and Q&A channels have been specifically built to handle and support staff questions and concerns. Setting up a specific, moderated helpdesk, for example, around an organisational change, can help keep inappropriate content out of other staff discussion forums. 'Risky' discussions, where sentiment might be negative, can be targeted securely to only those affected. This means that negativity does not need to 'infect' the rest of the organisation.

# It's too risky, too uncontrolled

Management may equate loss of formality with a decline in standards. The idea that staff can write what they want runs counter to the command-and-control structure of many organisations.

Considerable time, effort, and money go into crafting a strong brand image. CEOs may fear that the company's image will suffer if they make it easy for staff to say anything they want about the organization or their colleagues and managers. They may also worry about leaks to outside world.

## The response

Just because communication is taking place online doesn't mean that professionalism and respect will be forgotten. Most employees already know that inappropriate use of email is not acceptable, and will transfer this knowledge automatically to social media tools.

Don't forget that Management have legitimate concerns about the need to keep some information confidential. You can offset Management's fear of losing control by implementing appropriate security measures and guidelines for these channels, just as you do with email and Internet use.

There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to setting the policy. You know your organisation and whatever works best for your organisation is the best way to go. IBM's solution was to create a wiki and to get its staff to create the policy themselves.

The fact that blogs and online discussion are visible is more likely to deter inappropriate comments.

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms social media channels have been built only for secure employee communication. Only people with a unique SnapComms Client applet residing on their computer can view these channels. And only then, if they have been targeted with view rights. This means that the risk of leaks to the outside world is dramatically reduced.

Code of conduct and moderation options mean that if it possible to keep a close eye on conversations that are considered high risk.

Desktop alerts can inform moderators when new content is added to blogs, forums, Q&A spots and staff helpdesk. This can allow moderators to check that information is correct and amend posts if necessary.

# Productivity will suffer

Do your executives dismiss social media as a waste of time?  Or as a diversion that prevent staff doing their jobs?  Even if uses are legitimate, time needs to be spent producing employee blogs and participating in staff discussion forums and Wikis.  They're already busy enough. Add to this the time it takes for others to read them. Surely productivity will suffer?

## The response

Overall productivity should increase as a result of tools such as employee blogs, wikis and staff discussion forums.  These channels allow information and knowledge to move more freely through the organization. The time investment only represents a shift in what employees spend their time on.  Employees won't read what doesn't help or relate to them.

Social media increases productivity in many ways.  For example:

- By leveraging your employees' networks, your teams can access a vast store of knowledge, which would normally remain untapped.
- Social media allows virtual meetings to take place anywhere or any time around the world. Staff don't even have to 'meet' at the same time for communication to take place.  The increased cost of travel means using social media tools as an employee communications channel is an attractive proposition.
- Employee blogs, staff discussion forums and wikis can be a useful way to cut down on internal email traffic.

## How SnapComms can help

The SnapComms web 2.0 employee communications channels have been designed to be efficient to use.

Employees do not require user names and passwords. Just one click allows them to participate in the employee blogs and staff discussion forums that they have been given access rights to.

The design and layout of the pages are purpose built to be easy to read and structured to be scan-able.

New content specific to each employee is highlighted to them personally.

Standard reporting displays the average time spent by users and a view of the 'power users'. These reports can help address any senior manager's concerns with regard to time wasting.  In addition, online polls can be customised to provide an insight into staff perceived value. This makes it easy to quantify the time spent by staff on web 2.0 communication versus the value gained by the business.

The SnapComms Staff Helpdesk and Q&A channels specifically designed to **improve** productivity. Employees can ask a question in an online helpdesk or Q&A spot and nominated content owners can receive a desktop notification of the question. Once the question has been answered, it sits in a tagged, searchable, evolving repository of knowledge.

# Uptake will be low

Management may voice concerns that your efforts will be wasted if employees don't embrace the technology - resulting in a low uptake of the new social media tools. They have a valid concern that it will be difficult getting employees to embrace web 2.0 communications channels and use them to share their knowledge. Many workers still believe knowledge is power and are loath to give it away.

## The response

The emerging, digital native workforce are already expert users, who expect to have these tools to hand. Others will embrace social media tools given time and encouragement.  For example, staff could tap into a social network to organise car pooling or to organise a staff sports team.  Once familiar with these tools, they can and will use them for business related applications.

Encourage senior executives to champion these communication channels for you and use 'evangelists' to demonstrate the benefits.  Make sure you publicize and celebrate the achievement of business outcomes through using these tools.

Encourage uptake through culture change initiatives. You could, for example, make blogging a subject of reward and recognition. It won't take long before everyone figures out that using blogs pays off.

Create a hot-spot which actively attracts people.  Monitor discussion taking place on forums and blogs and promote interesting themes via other channels such as the staff E-zine to drive participation.

## How SnapComms can help

Since the SnapComms social media channels only require one click to participate, staff will not be put off by laborious sign up or log-on procedures. The SnapComms Interactive channels are intuitive and user friendly. Employees may not even realise that they are using a 'new groovy' web 2.0 communications technology. They will simply get on with the business of two-way communication and information sharing.

The SnapComms solution set consists of a range of other innovative internal communications channels which can help promote and drive adoption of interactive employee communications channels.

For example, the screensaver messaging tool can raise awareness of new interactive communications channels by turning employee screensavers into dynamic interactive bill boards.  An image is worth a thousand words.  For instance, an image of the CEO with a pen can be a powerful and engaging way to notify staff that the CEO has updated his/her blog. Staff can simply click the image to view.

The SnapComms Staff E-Mag tool pushes company news directly to employees' computer screens and provides click-through links to relevant Intranet pages or social media channels.  Staff can also submit their own articles and updates to the staff e-mag.  This means that you no longer have to chase different people in various departments for news content for your internal e-mag.  Use SnapComms Staff E-Mag to feature highlights from staff discussion forums and employee blogs to stimulate interest and encourage participation. Click through links allow staff to easily 'join the conversation'.

Staff Blogs and Employee Discussion Forums can be RSS (Really Simple Syndication) enabled.  This allows staff to opt into sites that are of interest and receive updates whenever new content is added.

However, RSS can suffer from a number of issues:

- It requires users to 'opt in' to specific feeds – something they rarely take the time to do
- It can become a cluttered channel full of unfiltered rubbish and consequently is ignored

A Desktop Staff News Ticker can provide a more effective alternative.  Employees can still choose to opt into RSS feeds if required. However, Internal Communicators can filter and push out important updates to targeted employees, either as an aggregated summary or as scrolling headlines on the employee's computer screen.

# IT won't let us

IT teams are sometimes threatened by others coming on to their patch.  Generally, they do not rate social media tools anywhere near the top of their priority list (see It's not a priority).

IT doesn't want to spend the time or money to test social media software on company networks. Worried about security, they may claim it could cost tens of thousands of dollars and take up to a year to make sure applications don't conflict with existing programs. They also resist external hosting, asserting it puts company data at risk.

## The response

IT departments think in terms of systems 'uptime' and data security. Given the importance of their role and the priorities assigned to them, it is hardly surprising that they resist social media tools.  In addition, most IT employees are not communication experts, so they may not see all the benefits of social media as communication tools.

Apply the Golden Rule of Communications, 'You must actually communicate.'  Sell the value of social media tools to IT. Work with IT as a cross-functional team, not a dysfunctional one, and bring them in early.  IT people need you to take on board their concerns, just as you need them to help implement your solutions.

It's worth noting, however, that McKinsey research showed that when implementing social media solutions satisfaction is:

• **Lowest** when IT drives vendor selection, and
• **Second lowest** when businesses define the need and IT finds the vendor.

The key takeaway is that vendor / platform selection is not a decision that you can outsource to IT. IT should be a key resource as a support role.

 'DIY' can be cheaper and speedier than pushing for corporate solutions. Once tools are shown to produce value for the organization, it will be easier to justify budget for a wider implementation.

## How SnapComms can help

SnapComms Interactive provides cost effective, secure employee blogging, staff discussion forums and interactive helpdesk capability that managed can be easily run by non IT departments across the business (e.g. Employee Communications team).

When SnapComms is supplied as a hosted solution, the only work required from IT is to test the Client applet and deploy the pre-packaged applet on to employee's computers. From there, non IT administrators can quickly and easily set up new discussion forums, blogs and interactive helpdesks and specify which employee groups have posting, commenting, moderation and view rights.

The SnapComms Interactive channels do not interact with other desktop applications, and generate only secure web traffic over the company network.

SnapComms solution is also available as an in-house solution for a small additional charge.  This can be a good option for IT teams worried about hosting company information outside of the organisation.

In terms of selling the benefit to the IT team, point out that the SnapComms Helpdesk tool can be an asset to IT teams. It allows staff to report a problem or ask a question in an online 'helpdesk'. Moderators can be nominated for each 'helpdesk' and receive desktop alert notifications when new questions are posted.  Moderators can answer questions directly or point the person, via hyperlink, to where an answer can be found on the intranet or network.  Each specific question is tagged and is searchable; meaning that past questions and answers can be easily located in an evolving online IT support repository.

# You can't demonstrate the business value

Many communicators get enthusiastic about social media tools but find the business value is hard to quantify. Communications jargon such as 'increase engagement' and 'build communities' are intangible and often hard to measure. Management may require you to offer proof that these tools are beneficial.

## The response

Here are a few ideas to help you pitch your strategies to sceptical bosses:

- Keep your presentation focused on the business needs and use commercial terms to sell concepts
- Focus on the business outcomes. For example: It's an inexpensive way for global teams to collaborate and to leverage the know-how gleaned from overseas projects
- Define projects around achieving specific business and communications objectives

If management is worried about the project's success, pilot the project. Get project champions to relate their positive experiences, so you have some tangible evidence of how well the tools you selected have worked for your organisation.

To back up your case for implementing social media, present management with relevant case studies. IBM, Sun Microsystems and hundreds of other Fortune 500 companies have successful stories to tell.

Keep in mind the following advice:

> *"My experience is that senior managers who are afraid of social software hide behind pointless ROI arguments. Senior managers who get it, make it happen without endless hoops and hurdles - if you're faced with the former, then you're probably talking to the wrong person. Try someone else …"*

> Richard Dennison. Internal Programme Manager, British Telecom Plc

## How SnapComms can help

As part of the standard set up of a SnapComms Interactive channel, the administrator can specify optional online poll questions for each social media channel. The default questions are:

- This content helps me feel part of the organisation / increases my satisfaction
- This content helps me do my job
- This content is interesting

Such questions allow you to quantify the value that interactive channels bring to employees.

Snap Interactive reporting includes poll responses as well as a range of other measures which can help demonstrate the ROI of social media channels.

For example:

- Average time spent by users plus a view of the 'power users' - making it easy to quantify the time spent by staff using social media versus the business value gained.

- Content popularity – A view of which content is popular, allowing you to assess what's 'hitting the mark'. Are staff spending the most time in productive information sharing? What about sites that have a fun element and could perhaps influence engagement? Or perhaps staff are spending time discussing concerns and issues, indicating some underlying issues that need to be addressed.

A free trial or low cost pilot is also available from SnapComms allowing you to pilot the use of social media tools in a low key manner, refine your plans and demonstrate business value based on learning. From here it can be easier to ask senior managers for a more comprehensive web 2.0 commitment.

# There's no clear way to measure success

Management's role is to make appropriate decisions that will increase the organisation's productivity and profitability/success rate. Reporting progress against objectives is important to their on going decision making.

It is internal communication's role to quantify the value of social media channels.

## How?

A good strategy is to work out what you want to achieve and state how it's going to help your organization. If you include SMART goals, and build in some guidelines and rules, you should be able to measure your success. Try to gather quantitative as well as qualitative data to build a watertight business case.

Since most tools are relatively inexpensive, you can afford to try something out and measure the impact.

Things you might measure include:

- Were there any implementation issues and what did we learn from this?
- What else did we learn? (For example, what did we learn about employees, customers, or processes?)
- Did we gain experience?
- Did we generate innovative ideas or solutions to problems?
- How did the staff respond? (use traffic stats and online reporting tools)
- What value did staff perceive? (use polls where possible)
- How much time did staff spend?
- What content was popular or particularly helpful?
- How did these channels contribute to achieving the specified business / communications objectives?

## How SnapComms can help

In addition to reporting options such as online staff polls which can help quantify perceived value and ROI of interactive channels. Reports also show the time spent by staff using the web 2.0 channels. This allows you to asses the impact on 'productivity' of such social media channels.

SnapComms produces additional standard reports in real time which show which employee blogs, forums, helpdesk and Q&A spots are most popular and traffic reports show who is posting and commenting and where.

# Appendix A: Channels to help drive social media uptake

The SnapComms tools provide innovative channels to communicate and interact with staff

- At times that suit their work flow / they are more receptive
- All tools have click-through link capability to drive social media participation
- All are able to be easily targeted to different groups of staff as appropriate

SnapComms is a cost effective, hosted, fully managed solution. In house versions are also available.

## Screen saver Messaging – Digital Signage on the Screen saver

When we have staff suffering from information overload it can be a real challenge to communicate with them.  This is especially true if our messages are not considered urgent or immediately important to staff.  A great way to build awareness of key messages without being intrusive or adding to the email burden is to use screensavers which can act as dynamic billboards around the business.

SnapComm's screensavers work just like standard screensavers do.....the difference is:

- They can be quickly and easily changed
- Target-able so different groups can receive different content
- Can communicate passively or solicit a response from staff
- Staff are able to upload one personal image as their own screensaver (optional)
- Delivers messages at a time when staff are often most receptive (i.e. not right in the middle of their work flow)
- Can tempt staff to find out more via click through links
- Brighten up office areas making them more dynamic and engaging. Like changing bill boards around the business.

Screensavers are a great way to build awareness without being intrusive or causing annoyance.

Options include:

- Sequencing images with text
- Countdown clocks
- Flash animated screensavers
- Html screensavers

It is also possible to upload power-point slides or complete animated power-point sequences.

Most screensavers can typically be designed internally in less than half an hour. Web sites like www.bigstockphotos.com make it really easy to find appropriate images.  You can also develop templates, e.g. in Power Point, Photoshop or any other similar application for updates such as events, invitations and breaking news which can be updated in a couple of minutes.

## Desktop Staff Quiz Tool

In 30 days people typically forget 80% of what they have learnt if it is not reinforced. This applies to key training and also to important messages. One answer is to reinforce such information via a quiz.  The SnapComms Quiz tool was developed for this purpose and has the added bonus that it can be fun for staff and build moral.

The Quiz tool is quick to set up, easy to target to specific groups and it's

really easy for people to answer. It 'pops up' on the employee's computer and provides options to complete now or defer until later.  The SnapComms Administrator can specify how frequently and how often the quiz reappears until completed. 'Silent Quizzes' that staff can opt into via a hyperlink can also be set up.

A 'sixty second' quiz can be short, punchy and really effective, especially if there's a prize incentive attached.  When quizzes are set up in this way, very high participation rates are easily achieved.

Like all of the SnapCooms tools, the Quiz is targetable to different groups of employees. You can theme quizzes with a logo or image and automated reminders can be set up, so it will continue to reappear and remind staff to participate.

Reporting via the SnapComms Content Manager is automatic and updated every minute, making it really easy to manage. Upon submission of the answers, an optional personal pop up display showing the employee's individual score and the correct answers can to help reinforce learning.

## Scrolling Desktop News Tickers

With the growth of the internet and other technologies, there has been an explosion in the information available to us.  The challenge is to find the correct, most up to date information without having to spend lots of time 'wading through treacle'. SnapComms Ticker leverages the power of RSS, which you may be aware of, but has additional flexibility and can be easily customised.

Employees can be working away, and along the bottom of the screen appears a scrolling new feed.  If they are deep in thought they may ignore it and it won't interrupt their flow.  If they are ready for an interruption they'll have a scan.  Alternatively, when an appropriate break in the work flow comes they may click through to find out more.

A Desktop Ticker allows you to leverage external information sources as it can push out information updates from any source that is RSS enabled (without requiring staff to opt in, although this is an option).  This helps keep to staff informed and be more effective in their roles.

However, the most powerful feature of SnapComm's Ticker is that the Administrators can write their own feeds and push them out to target staff groups.  This means that you can quickly send out any news update with a link to further information, simply by typing in a headline, inputting link details and setting the target groups.  This format is ideal for the call centre environment as it can keep people informed of the latest updates without interrupting their workflow.

Desktop Tickers are a great way to provide information updates and transport staff directly to the information they need…..anything from a specific intranet page, to a website to a document on the shared network

Because communications are targetable, and you can have more than one Administrator, you can nominate selected staff from different departments (e.g. the sales team or engineering department) to manage the Desktop Ticker for their audiences…..as an overall Administrator, you have complete visibility of all messages

It is also possible to run standard RSS feeds through the Desktop Ticker, so if you have an RSS enabled intranet, you can run this in addition to customising other feeds.

Another feature is the option to set up the ticker to continue scrolling on-screen until clicked upon. This means that you can guarantee that staff have viewed important content.

## Desktop Staff Survey Tool

Involving staff is one of the key ways we can build engagement. It's also really important to measure communications effectiveness so we know what's hitting the mark and identify which areas need to improve. This also allows us to demonstrate business value to senior managers. A Snap Poll or Survey is a tool which can be used to achieve these goals.

SnapComm's Survey tool is different to other surveys in that it isn't too complicated and it's pushed directly to the desktop (and not delivered by email). It 'pops up' on the employee's computer and provides an option to complete now or defer until later. The SnapComms Administrator can specify how frequently and how often the pop up reappears until the survey is completed. 'Silent Surveys' that staff can opt into via a hyperlink can also be set up.

The survey is quick to set up and works best if it's short and punchy (no more than 10 questions – multi-choice if possible, although various other answer options are also available). A prize incentive can help, so does the automated reminder meaning high response rates.

It works best as a benchmarking tool, a temperature check, or as initial research prior to the launch of a more comprehensive (and time consuming) survey.

Results can be grouped by unit – which means that you can measure effectiveness of managers in areas such as information cascade, or engagement – since direct supervisors have such an influence on engagement, this can be an important.

Surveys can be set up to allow confidential responses, which can be valuable in times of change and uncertainty.

## Desktop Alerts

When we have some breaking news – such as a security alert or important update, a Desktop Alert becomes a really powerful tool. It 'pops up' on the targeted employee's computer screen.

SnapComm's Desktop Alert is persistent – the message will not go away until it has been viewed and acted upon (if specified by administrator). 'Read Now' or 'Read Later' options are available or immediate full display of the message can be specified by the administrator. The size, position and prominence of the Desktop Alert window can also be preset for each message. The user eventually has to open or respond to the message to remove it from their screen (unless an expiry date or maximum reoccurrence option has been specified)

Reporting options mean you can report on who has / has not opened the full message and/or clicked links contained in the message. This can be great for compliance applications.

## RSVP Alert Tool

SnapComm's RSVP tool is a meeting request or invite that behaves like a Desktop Alert. This tool is ideal for maximising the impact of events such as change management briefing sessions or CEO road shows.

You can include explanatory text and ask employees to select which session or meeting they want to attend. Once responded to, the RSVP will automatically populate the employee's Outlook calendar with the appointment.

Reporting tools in the content manager make it easy to see which employees are attending which sessions. You can plan room sizes, catering etc. and close off specific time slots as rooms become filled.

This is a great tool to use in times of change or crisis management. One of the key rules around managing change is to 'communicate, communicate, communicate'. It is really important to have face to face time and provide opportunities for staff to ask questions and express their views. However, it can be tricky to get everyone in a room at the same time as staff still have jobs to do and can be very busy.

## Video Alert Tool

SnapComms provide a Desktop Alert format that delivers video to targeted employee desktops: So your CEO can't be at the meeting? No problem. Use a Video pop-up Alert and staff can see the commitment and intent in the CEO's eyes and hear the passion/empathy in their voice. Targeting features mean that you can stagger delivery of the video alert to different employee groups as required.
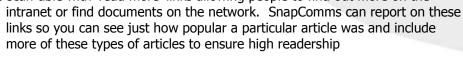
## SnapMag – Electronic Staff Magazine...with an important difference

Did you know that research show that the average office worker is interrupted 11 times per hour with messages that have nothing to do with the task he or she is performing at that time? Each interrupt has a cost. It takes time for the employee to refocus back into their work. Most emails, particularly those that are targeted to 'all staff' contain generic information that does not have to be read there and then.

SnapMag allows anyone in the business to input these generic information updates into a one stop magazine format. An 'editor' can quickly approve articles prior to their publication into the magazine.

In addition to 'user generated content', SnapMag isn't delivered by email, it has much more visibility. Each time SnapMag is published, staff members will see a ticker-bar appear which scrolls three times at the bottom of their screens. They can click-to-read there and then, or alternatively they can go to their message history to read the latest publication of SnapMag at a time that suits them better

SnapMag is designed to be scan-able with 'read more' links allowing people to find out more on the intranet or find documents on the network. SnapComms can report on these links so you can see just how popular a particular article was and include more of these types of articles to ensure high readership

Embedded email links allow readers to respond / reply directly to the author.....depending on response levels, the author can call a discussion group, summarise comments in the next edition or maybe set up a Blog or Forum for further debate.

There is also an option to display the magazine as a logon screen which is great because most people like to read something to warm into the day. Readership rates increase significantly when this option is enabled.

It means that, instead of 11 interrupts per hour, our staff can focus on their specific roles and then chose to read all of the 'general news and updates' in a one-stop format at a time they choose. They are expecting these types of messages and hence are more receptive.

SnapMag is targetable to different user groups so individual departments can have their own version of the magazine.

SnapMag is not only a way to cut down all staff emails. You can also use it as a way to allow staff to communicate with each other and to build engagement. Because any member of staff can participate in this magazine (assuming this option is enabled), it is a great way for staff to become more involved, feel part of the community and hence build their engagement.

Your company culture and demographic may mean that tools like blogs and forums are simply not appropriate or acceptable to senior managers. There may be fears around loss of control or the impact of disengaged staff. Under these circumstances, SnapMag can be a great alternative. Snap Mag enables you to distribute 'safe discussion' directly to the employee's computer screen.

## Blogs, Forums, Helpdesks and Q&A Spots

If your company culture and demographics suit the use of social media tools consider SnapComms Web 2.0 tools.

The SnapComms web 2.0 tools have the following unique features:

- Specifically developed for employee communication
- Cost effective and easy to implement
- Secure, hosted solution authenticated to each employees computer (or log on profile)
- Easy to use, 'scan-able' for busy people
- Tools to search for key information
- Promotional tools to drive usage and value
- Unique reporting tools to measure value and ROI

There is no IT involvement required to set these tools. The SnapComms Interactive tools are strategic communications tools and specifically designed to be easily managed and operated by the Communications team and not become an IT 'project' each time a new forum is to be set up or a change needs to be made.

This permits you to quickly and easily try concepts out. For example, you want to implement a discussion forum around the launch of a new product …but there is some debate around whether this will provide value or whether people will participate….. These tools allow you to test uptake and evolve the use of such tools without the need for 'big project' budget, business cases or resource.

Administrators can quickly and easily set up new forums or blogs and specify which employee groups have authoring, commenting, and read rights.

The SnapComms web 2.0 I tools are also user friendly. Automatic user authentication means that the network is fully secure and does not require the use of user names and passwords.
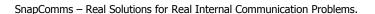
Extensive reporting options such as the total time spent by individual staff, 'rank this forum' polls, and user demographics as well as more traditional site traffic statistics mean that it is easy to measure value and demonstrate ROI.

# Appendix B: Example blogging policy for internal use

- Show courtesy and respect to colleagues
- Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc
- Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory (e.g. politics, religion)
- Be yourself. Let your voice reflect your personality
- Make sure you have your facts correct
- Honour copyright laws
- Admit when you are wrong (fully and without delay)
- Disagree respectfully. Don't pick fights
- Consider who else is participating. Don't disclose sensitive or confidential information
- Try to add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective
- Be brief.  Make your comments easy for others to read.

# Appendix C: Terms and explanations

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Blogs | Blogs are sites on the internet that anyone can create and write regular commentaries on what they consider is news.  It's about sharing news, 21st century style.  News is shared not only by professionals but also by the average person on a more personnel level.<br>Blog sites also allow interaction with the reader as the reader has the ability to post comments.<br>Like minded bloggers create communities so they work together and inspire one another. |
| Social Media | Social media can take many different forms, such as:<br>• Social networks (Facebook, Linkedin, MySpace)<br>• Conversation enabling publishing platforms (Blogs, forums, interactive helpdesks, podcasts)<br>• Democratized content networks (Wikis)<br>• Presence networks / 'micro blogging' (Twitter)<br>• Content sharing sites (YouTube, del.icio.us, Flickr)<br>• Virtual networking platforms (Second Life) |
| Web 2.0 | Web 2.0 uses the Internet as a platform to create a network for users to run software-applications entirely through a browser.  This has allowed 'Web-based' communities using tools such as wikis, blogs and social networking services like Facebook and MySpace to evolve.<br>Web 2.0 aims to enhance communication and collaboration among users in a democratic environment. The users drive the nature of how the tools are used to communicate. |
| Wiki | A wiki starts off as a web page and generally ends up as multiple pages, as people who can access them can also contribute and modify the content.<br>A wiki is a great way for groups to collaborate. They are much more efficient than sending multiple emails which are difficult to follow and usually end up stagnating in individual inboxes. |

# Appendix D : Case Study links

BT Web 2.0 adoption case study

HP's Internal Social Network

IBM and employee podcasting

CEO Blogs – What you should know

Executive audio blogging at HP

IBM's blogging policy increases engagement

UPS celebrates centennial with social media